

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2355

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

JCS

CINCPAC

INCPACAF

ICINCPACFLT

CINCPACREPPHIL

CDR 13TH AF, CLARK

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 4883

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, PFOR, RP

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT MARCOS' SPEECH ON US-PHILIPPINE SECURITY
RELATIONS, APRIL 16

REF: MANILA 4813

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT'S SPEECH APR 16 FOCUSED PRIMARILY
ON MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY. ALTHOUGH SUGGESTING NEED FOR REVIEW,
MARCOS AVOIDED ANY TIMETABLE. SPEECH REITERATED OLD CON-
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CERNS ABOUT LACK OF AUTOMATICITY COMPARED TO NATO AGREEMENT

AND NOTED PINTEDLY THAT PRESIDENT FORD HAD NOT OFFERED ANY ASSURANCE TO PHILIPINES. ROMULO CONFIRMED SEPARATELY TO AMBASSADOR THAT REVIEW HAD NO TIME FUSE. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH URGENCY APPEARS TO HAVE VANISHED FROM REIVEW, AND EXPRES- SIONS ARE LARGELY REPETITIVE, SPEECH DOES REFLECT REAL CONCERNS. ULTIMATE GOAL MAY BE TO ESTABLISH BASIS FOR RENTAL A LA SPAIN IF U.S.WILL NOT IMPROVE COMMITMENT. IN THIS MOMENT OF SLACK WE PROPOSE TO CAUTION GOP AGAINST THROWING ISSUE INTO LAP OF CONGRESS AT THIS TIME. NEXT MARCOS SPEECH APR 17 WILL TOUCH ON MBA AND MAA. END SUMMARY.

1. BEFORE U. P. LAW ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT MARCOS DELIVERED FAIRLY BRIEF SPEECH EXPRESSING HIS CONCERNS ESSENTIALLY WITH MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY AND HIS DESIRE THAT FUTURE OF US-PHILIPPINE RELATIONS BE PLACED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE ON THE BASIS OF A COMPLETE RECIPROCITY INTEREST. PRESIDENT SET NO DEADLINE, HOWEVER, TO ADJUSTMENT OF SUCH RELATIONSHIP.

2. SPEECH OPENED WITH STATEMENT THAT PULL BACK OF US DEFENSE LINE AS RESULT OF FALL OF INDOCHINA WOULD PUT PHILIPPINES ON THE FRONT LINE OF US DEFENSE. CONSEQUENTLY, MARCOS SAID, IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR PHILIPPINES TO SCRUTINIZE MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY TO DETERMINE ITS VALUE IN EVENT PHILIPPINES SHOULD BE ATTACKED. LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF TREATY PROVIDES NO GUARANTEE FOR PHILIPPINES. US PRO- POTES TO REACT ONLY TO ATTACK ON US BASES BUT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF INSURGENCY LED TO INFILTRATION OF AGENTS DIRECTED AGAINST PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT BUT NOT AGAINST US BASES? MOREOVER, RESPONSE TO TREATY OBLIGATIONS BYANY US GOVERN- MENT WOULD HAVE TO BE APPROVED BY US CONGRESS CONTRARY, HE SAID, TO AUTOMATIC RETALIATION CLAUSE IN NATO WHICH IS MORE BINDING ON US CONGRESS.PRESIDENT NOTED THAT REASSURANCES OF PRESIDENT FORD ON US DEFENSE COMMITMENTS DO NO DEPART FROM THOSE OF OTHER US PRESIDENTS. "IN REGARD TO PHILIPPINES SPECIFICALLY, PRESIDENT FORD HAS MADE NO COMMIMTNET CONCERNING AMERICAN ACITON INCASE OF AN ATTACK ON THE PHILIPPINES."

3. SECRETARY ROMULO ISSUED COMPLEMENTARY STATEMENT STAING CONFIDENTIAL

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AIM OF THE PROJECTED ASSESSMENT OF PHILIPPINE-AMERICAN SECURITY RELATIONS IS TO PREVENT HISTORY FROM REPEATING ITSLEF IN THE PHILIPPINES. ROMULO SAID THAT PRESIDENT HAD GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONCENTRATION ON SECURITY TREATIES WITH US THREE WEEKS AGO. IN ACCOMPANYING COUNTRY DIRECTOR FLECK ON COURTESY CALL ON GENERAL ROMULO APR 17, AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED TO GENERALROMULO THAT HE WOULD BE GOING ON HOME LEAVE BUT WOULD BE READY TO BEGIN TALKS IN MAY OR ON RETURN

IN JULY. GENERAL ROMULO BEAT HASTY RETREAT, INDICATING THAT PHILIPPINES DID NOT HAVE ANY TIME IN MIND FOR REVIEW OF SECURITY RELATIONS AND "EVERYTHING HAD BEEN SAID." MOREOVER, HE ADDED, PRESIDENT HAD DIRECTED HIM TO EXERCISE "PRUDENCE" IN ANY REVIEW.

4. COMMENT: PRESIDENT'S SPEECH, SEVERLY EDITED AS HE WAITED THROUGH LENGTHY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PROGRAM, CONSISTED LARGELY OF REHASH OF OLD ANDOFT-STATED CONCERNS. ALTHOUGH A REHASH, THEY ARE GENUINELY AND DEEPLY FELT CONCERNS WHICH WERE BROUGHT BACK TO THE SURFACE BY RECENT EVENTS IN INDO-CHINA AND BY US STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS RELATING TO US "COMMITMENTS" TO ALLIES CAMBODIA AND SOUTH VIET -NAM. THEY WERE, AS SPEECH INDICATED, ALSO VERY SPECIFICALLY STIMULATED BY FAILURE OF US TO MAKE ANY SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO PHILIPPINES OR TO EXTEND ANY REASSURANCES IN THIS TRYING PERIOD. IT IS ALSO LIKELY, WITH EYE NOT ONLY ON NATO AGREEMENT BUT ALSO ON US EXPERIENCE IN SPAIN, THAT MARCOS IS SEEKING TO STRENGTHEN BASIS ON WHICH TO REQUEST RENTAL FROM US IN RETURN FOR CONTINUATION OF BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES.

5. WHILE PHILIPPINES CONCERNS ARE REAL, PRESIDENT HAS NOW CLEARLY SIGNALLED THAT HE WILL PROCEED IN REVIEW WITHOUT HASTE. HAVING GIVEN VENT TO DEEP CONCERNS IN TYPICAL FILIPINO FASHION, PRESIDENT HAS EVIDENTLY DECIDED HE HAS GONE FAR ENOUGH FOR THE MOMENT. WHILE HE ASSESSES WHAT TO DO NEXT, WE WILL SUGGEST TO FILIPINOS THAT NOW MAY NOT BE THE BEST TIME TO RISK THROWING SUCH A PROBLEM INTO THE LAPS OF THE US CONGRESS.

6. WE UNDERSTAND PRESIDENT MARCOS WILL ADDRESS U.P. VANGUARD GROUP TOMORROW APR 18 ON SUBJECT OF MILITARY CONFIDENTIAL

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BASES AGREEMENT AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT. SULLIVAN

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